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ACRL CONFERENCE

FIFTH ACRL NATIONAL CONFERENCE: A BRIEF REPORT

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One of the prevailing themes of the Fifth ACRL National Conference held in Cincinnati, Ohio, was the state of the library materials budget. This theme manifested itself in papers on educational and general (E&G) expenditures, journal use studies, approval plans, and cooperative collection development. Although other collection management issues were featured at the conference, this report will focus on six papers and programs which dealt with the library materials budget.

"Academic Libraries: A Matter of Support"

**John M. Budd, Assistant Professor, Graduate School
of Library Science, University of Arizona**

Budd prefaced his remarks acknowledging that all librarians agree that they do not have enough money to meet their service goals. Because of this insufficient level of support, Budd's study analyzed the institutional support for academic libraries as expressed as a percentage of the school's educational and general (E&G) expenditures. Budd limited his study to 4-year institutions only, using the categories established by the American Association of University Professors: category 1—doctoral level, category 2A—comprehensive, and category 2B—general baccalaureate. The study covered the time period of 1976 to 1985 and briefly compared public and private institutions.

Budd found that the percentage of the library's budget for personnel was stable (45%) but that the percentage for books declined while that for periodicals increased. His hypothesis that library support as a measure of E&G expenditures had declined from 1976 to 1985 was confirmed. In fact, the decline has been quite steep for category 2A institutions and private institutions. In conclusion, Budd projected that, had category 1 institutions maintained the same percentage of E&G expenditures from 1976 to 1985, an additional \$1.25 million (mean) would have been added

to each library's budget.

"Where Does the Money Go? Measuring Cost-Effectiveness

Using a Microcomputer to Analyze Journal-Use Data"

**Tina Chrzastowski, Chemistry Librarian,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

After appointment as Chemistry Librarian, Chrzastowski was notified of a large deficit in the materials budget in chemistry. In order to identify serial titles for cancellation to rectify this deficit, a journal use study was needed. There were five possible approaches to such a study: a citation study, a faculty /user survey, a journal list study, a local citation study based on MA and Ph.D citations, and a local use study. A local use study was selected based on a 1977 University of Pittsburgh study which revealed that only 14.5% of titles were used.

Four categories of use were identified: circulation of bound and unbound issues (kept separately), in-house use via reshelving statistics, interlibrary lending, and interlibrary borrowing. The cost recorded was the 1987/88 subscription cost. The effectiveness rating would reflect a core of journals satisfying 90% of total user demands. The time period covered by the study was six months—January-June 1988. The database was built on a microcomputer with nineteen searchable and manipulable fields per title.

The study revealed that 9% of the titles were not used, 24% were used once or twice, and 67% were used more than twice. Of 31,703 total uses, 5% was for circulation of bound and unbound issues, 90% for in-house use, 4% for interlibrary lending, and 1% for interlibrary borrowing. The ten highest cost per use titles were identified, and eight of the ten were eventually cancelled. The average cost per use was \$3.53, and 3% of the budget was spent on unused titles. The cost per use by department based on call number follows:

Inorganic	\$14.63
Biochemistry	\$37.20
Analytical	\$15.60
General Chemistry	\$15.58
Chemical Engineering	\$36.21
Physical Chemistry	\$32.21

Truesdell's 20/80 law was validated with 26% of the collection accounting for 80% of the use. The 90% effectiveness rating was met by 323 of 529 active subscriptions. These 323 subscriptions represent 61% of the present journal collection and 79% of the journals budget.

"Circulation Patterns of Recent Imprints: Implications for the Materials Budget"

**Jane Treadwell, Director of Collection Management,
Emory University**

Soaring serials costs have forced many libraries to cut monograph purchases, and reducing

the approval plan is an obvious target when costs must be contained. While Treadwell was at Texas A&M University, it was projected that the periodicals budget would expend 100% of the entire materials budget by 1990 if action was not taken. In addition to serials cancellation, the library's Baker & Taylor approval plan was limited to select undergraduate titles (titles which are expected to receive review in a major scholarly journal).

To test the effect of this reduction, three hypotheses were formulated:

1. "Select" books are more likely than other books to circulate in the first 18 months.
2. Humanities books are the least likely to circulate in 18 months; sci/tech books are more likely to have circulated in 18 months.
3. Undergraduate titles are more likely to circulate than graduate titles.

To test these hypotheses, the 1986 titles purchased on approval were checked against the online catalog. The system provided information that the title had or had not circulated but could not provide the number of circulations per title. Of the 2878 title sample, 95% had circulated. However, the results of the survey would have been more meaningful with several changes. For example, the ability to compile the number of times a title had circulated would have provided more detail. In addition, Texas A&M does not restrict interlibrary lending in any way so some of the circulations could be for that use. At any rate, the study confirmed that cuts in the monograph and approval budgets could not be justified based on low use.

"CASSI and Collection Assessment: New Uses for an Old Tool"

Christine Johnston, Chemistry Librarian,

University of Texas at Austin

Johnston was required to cancel 10% of the chemistry serials collection with no time for study as a result of soaring serials costs. After the cancellation, the question remained as to whether the collection was still adequate. Johnston identified four purposes for a study of the collection: self-education in chemical literature and the library's collection, collection comparisons, justification for current serials expenditures, and justification for future serials budget requests. The *Chemical Abstracts Service Source Index (CASSI)* is a union list of 363 libraries covering 69,000+ serials and conference proceedings in the chemical sciences. Therefore, it was selected as the means to compare chemistry collections. Two libraries—University of California at Berkeley (UC-Berkeley) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)— were selected for comparison with the University of Texas at Austin (UT) based upon their strong chemistry libraries and up-to-date holdings in *CASSI*. Once selected, lists of titles held in common and titles not held in common were purchased from Chemical Abstracts.

The study compared the collection of UT (3857 titles) to MIT (2614) and UC-Berkeley (6181). Between UT and UC-Berkeley, 2810 titles were held in common. Between UT and MIT, 1764 titles were held in common. One explanation for the titles not held in common was the absence of medical and agricultural titles from the UT collection. (The UT Medical School has its own medical library in Houston and Texas A&M is the state's agriculture school). An evaluation of country of publication revealed that 1,000 of the titles held by UC-Berkeley that UT did not have were from the Soviet Union. Once these differences were eliminated, UC-Berkeley had only 218 chemistry titles which UT did not; MIT had only 100.

In summary, *CASSI* was felt to be a successful collection evaluation tool. The results of this were also used as a successful budget bargaining tool. In fact, 1989 was the first year in the last three years that departmental libraries at UT received money for new serials titles. The Chemistry Library used the results of this study to justify a higher percentage increase for new serials titles. Finally, the study was seen as a stimulant for further research projects.

"Evaluating Journals: Can Faculty Do the Job?"

**Nancy I. Elder, Head, Life Sciences Library,
University of Texas at Austin**

As mentioned previously, a 10% cut in serials subscriptions was mandated at the University of Texas at Austin. Elder embarked on a study to evaluate the use of faculty evaluations as a prediction of use. A small database of the library's serials was built including title, charged circulation, price, years reviewed, publisher, science citation impact factor, and faculty evaluation. Titles for evaluation were selected based on major subjects as reflected in the title. Faculty participation was based on five factors: interest in the project, willingness to invest time in the project, ability to be critical of one's own literature, ability to look beyond one's own research, and reasonableness.

Ten faculty members were selected in eleven broad areas. They were given copies of back issues of the titles and asked to complete their evaluation in the library. Evaluators were given a copy of all the information in the database except the charged circulation. The science citation impact factor of *Nature* was provided as a guide to understand the impact factors being reviewed. Each evaluator reviewed an average of twenty titles and all of their comments were entered in the database.

The circulation ratio was calculated as the number of circulations divided by the number of years of circulation included in the study. This ratio then fell into a low to high ranking of usage. These usage rankings were then examined against the comments made by the faculty. The study revealed that the faculty evaluations were a better predictor of high use titles. Their evaluations were not as successful as predictors of moderate and low use titles. Elder's conclusion was that faculty evaluations were the least useful in the areas where the librarian needs the most input—the low and moderate use titles. Instead, she will continue balancing faculty evaluations with use factors and her own professional judgement.

"Approval Plans, Budgets, and the 1990's: Future Trends and Alternatives" Barbara Nelson, Firm Order Librarian, Auburn University

Nelson reported on the results of a survey of Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) regarding approval, serial, and firm order budgets. The factors influencing overall library budgetary changes in these libraries were inflation, foreign currency fluctuations, and curriculum changes. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents had cut firm order or approval budgets to protect serials budgets. The majority of libraries modified their collection development policies when money was tight by reducing non-curriculum-related purchases and by reducing out-of-print purchasing.

Nancy Gibbs, Approval Plan Librarian, Auburn University

Gibbs reported on the strategies used by Auburn University to control its approval budget. Because the approval budget is a line item from the state legislature, accurate prediction of expenditures and subsequent approval plan management is critical. Strategies such as prioritization of notification slips were used.

Doug Duchin, Vice President for Academic Library Sales, Blackwell North America

Duchin stated that the approval plan should not be the heart of a library's collection development plan. Instead, it is a pre-review selection tool intended to automatically supply mainstream, highly visible titles. Approval plans are not designed to bring in obscure, esoteric titles. A return rate between 5 and 15% is ideal. The advantages of approval plans are consolidation of invoicing and the supply of added value services such as magnetic tape invoicing and management reports.

Duchin identified five possible reasons for inadequate approval allocations: funds have not been allocated sufficiently, disruption in the flow of books, the vendor's projections are inaccurate, the dollar has unexpectedly weakened or strengthened, and unanticipated curriculum or profile changes. Panic responses to increased or decreased funds include switching vendors, stopping the approval plan entirely, or requests for the vendor to ship a certain dollar value of titles simply to expend funds. The options for coping with decreased or increased funding are numerous:

- eliminate the obscure items
- limit the publisher list
- switch to blanket orders or standing orders
- limit peripheral subject areas
- establish cooperative buying plans
- establish deposit accounts
- reallocate funds within the budget
- renegotiate discounts
- eliminate the plan entirely
- switch to a slips-only plan
- eliminate peripheral formats
- purchase paper rather than cloth editions (very difficult for vendor to provide)

Susan Nutter, Director of Libraries, North Carolina State University

Nutter revealed that prior to her experience with the Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN) she had not been an advocate of cooperative collection development. She identified four overall facts which are important to any discussion of cooperative collection development. First, cooperative collection development cannot be adopted as a short-term solution. Instead, it is a long-term commitment. Second, it is not a means to save money; it simply increases access to resources. Third, the issue of geography is not as important as it once was. Finally, the benefits accrue to all parties if the librarians listen to what their users want.

TRLN includes Duke University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North

Carolina State University, each no more than 25 miles apart. Cooperative programs began as early as 1933 with daily truck delivery and exchange of catalog cards beginning in 1934. Each university is assigned collection areas at the research level and mechanisms are in place to alert the other institutions when expensive purchases are made. The combined materials budget of the TRLN is \$12 million dollars; \$6 million dollars of which is devoted to serials. The combined collection includes over 8.5 million volumes, 245,000 volumes added per year, 86,000 serials subscriptions, and seven million microforms. Direct on-site borrowing for faculty, staff and students is supported. Daily truck delivery and facsimile machines in each library facilitate the cooperative relationship.

The recent serials crisis has not been as devastating for these libraries although they are vulnerable because there is so little duplication to be eliminated. Future directions for TRLN include enhanced access and document delivery, a shared acquisitions system, a cooperative online approval plan, and use of the OCLC/AMIGOS collection analysis system.